

## guestcolumn

# A lasting impression

Throughout my life, I have always believed there are people we meet who positively influence more than what we may realize at that time. When we are “touched” by these people, it is evident over time that their impact is beyond that of a typical role model. Scott Gast is one of those people.

When my son was 6 years old, he made his own decision to begin playing the guitar. My wife and I did not think this decision would become a passion. We took Luke into a local music store a month before his 7th birthday to research guitars and lessons.

I will never forget as we approached the front door of the Musicians’ Alley and looked at the postings of upcoming local band performances. Luke pointed at a handbill with pictures of the CoCoBeanOs and said, “I want to play guitar like them.”

He was pointing at a picture of Scott. He did not know who this young man on the handbill was at the time, but he had made a connection with this person at that moment.



Provided photo

Local musician Scott Gast performs in the Rolling Stones tribute band “Start Me Up” in September 2014 in front of 100,000 fans in Honduras. Gast, who was also frontman for the CoCoBeanOs, was killed in a car crash in November 2014.

As Luke began his quest to become a guitar player, he would ask me if we could go watch this band, the CoCoBeanOs, play music. He really did not know or care what kind of music they played; he really just wanted to go see this frontman perform. At this point, Luke still had never met Scott, yet Scott's influence had already inspired my son to practice without prompting and enjoy playing his guitar.

Two years after beginning lessons, the CoCoBeanOs had a scheduled performance at the plaza in downtown Sandusky. This was our opportunity to go see the band, and more importantly, the individual who had such a motivating impact on my son.

We arrived early and watched the band set up for the "gig." Unexpectedly, Scott approached us and introduced himself. His father had told him what a fan Luke was and really wanted to meet him.

Scott took several minutes out of his busy schedule to sit and talk with my son. Scott was kind, encouraging and very unselfish. You could tell this young man was genuine and sincere, and he

really loved taking the time to talk with people of all ages.

Before Scott got back to setting up the equipment, he handed Luke a guitar pick and said, "Keep playing because you love to play."

Once again, I would reiterate that this interaction between Scott and Luke was very brief, yet it has had such an enormous impact on him.

A few months before Scott's passing, Luke went to his regular lesson at the music store. The store was closed for business as it was after hours, and Scott was in the store rehearsing for an upcoming performance.

I remember Scott coming back to get some equipment from the rehearsal rooms as we waited to go into our lesson. He stopped and looked past me at Luke. He had remembered Luke from years before. Once again, Scott took the time to converse with Luke, providing advice, inspiration and encouragement.

I share these memories for a couple of reasons. First, as a father I appreciate and am thankful to all people who have positive impacts on my children. These

are the people who help me shape them and will always be part of their lives. Secondly, I look at Scott Gast as someone who not only inspired Luke to play guitar, but also provided life lessons to him. Luke continues to focus, practice and perfect playing the guitar. I believe Scott had a great deal to do with Luke's determination to be the best at playing.

It is not the time that we spend with people or the time we spend on Earth that determines how much impact we can have on them. It is what we do and say while we are alive.

Luke only had two very brief encounters with Scott, but these brief interactions had more impact on my son than one can imagine.

Although we as a family are extremely saddened by the passing of Scott and sometimes feel he had much more to do on this Earth, we know God has an angel who continues to be part of the lives of those he met.

Even in death, Scott is still very much a part of Luke's life, and we are fortunate to have met him.

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